

Joint Council of Municipal Planning Boards in
Essex County, New Jersey

An east - west freeway for Essex county,
New Jersey

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An aerial photograph of a city street scene. In the foreground, a wide street with multiple lanes is filled with various cars and a yellow school bus. A row of green trees separates the street from a large, multi-story white building complex. In the background, more city buildings are visible, including one with a sign that says "NEW YORK". A blue rectangular box is superimposed over the upper right portion of the image, containing the title text.

An East-West Freeway

for Essex County, New Jersey

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185 W. State Street
Trenton, N. J.

An East-West Freeway

for **ESSEX COUNTY, N. J.**

Cover illustration by Ronald McLeod depicts a "freeway" safely speeding all kinds of motor traffic THROUGH urban area. Note grade-separated intersection, controlled access and nearness to business center. Attractive landscaping tends to enhance adjacent residential and property values.

Sponsored by

Joint Council of Municipal Planning Boards in Essex County, New Jersey

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Foreword

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THE PURPOSE of this brochure, which is sponsored by the Joint Council of Planning Boards in Essex County, is to direct public attention to one of the most neglected highway conditions in New Jersey.

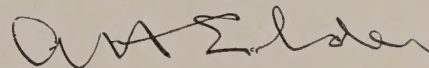
From 1917, when the New Jersey State Highway Department was organized, until the enactment by Congress of the "Federal Aid Highway Act of 1944," the policy of both Federal and State Highway Officials influenced at times by lack of cooperation by municipal officials, was to limit through highway construction to main highways connecting the principal cities and the rural and recreational areas by a network of traffic routes which stop near the boundaries of populous centers. The result has been that several of the most important State Highways today bring great streams of traffic to the urban fringe of Essex County and then scatter this traffic through city streets, causing traffic congestion, hazard to pedestrians and policing expense to the municipalities at countless street intersections.

The Federal Highway Act of 1944 was revolutionary in character. It was enacted to correct the above condition by stimulating the construction through populous centers, of a new type of controlled-access highway designed to promote a maximum of traffic flow, safety and saving of time.

Prompted by this Federal Legislation and the pressing need for relief from the diffusion of east and west bound traffic through the streets of Essex County, the New Jersey Legislature, upon the recommendation of this Joint Council and of many other public and civic organizations, enacted and Governor Edge on April 26, 1946 signed, Chapter 176 of the Laws of 1946, which provides that "as soon as practicable" there shall be added to the State Highway System a new "Freeway" extending from West Orange, eastwardly through Orange, East Orange, and Newark to a connection with Route 25A.

This Freeway project was originated and is endorsed by the Planning Boards of Newark, East Orange, Orange and West Orange, which are the local communities in which it would be constructed. After many conferences extending over the past year, it is the opinion of this Joint Council representing all of the Planning Boards in Essex County, that there is no pending highway project in New Jersey that will better serve the general public interest than this east-west freeway through the most populous area in the State.

Now that the Freeway has been officially authorized, the public interest requires that definite plans for its construction be expedited.



CHAIRMAN

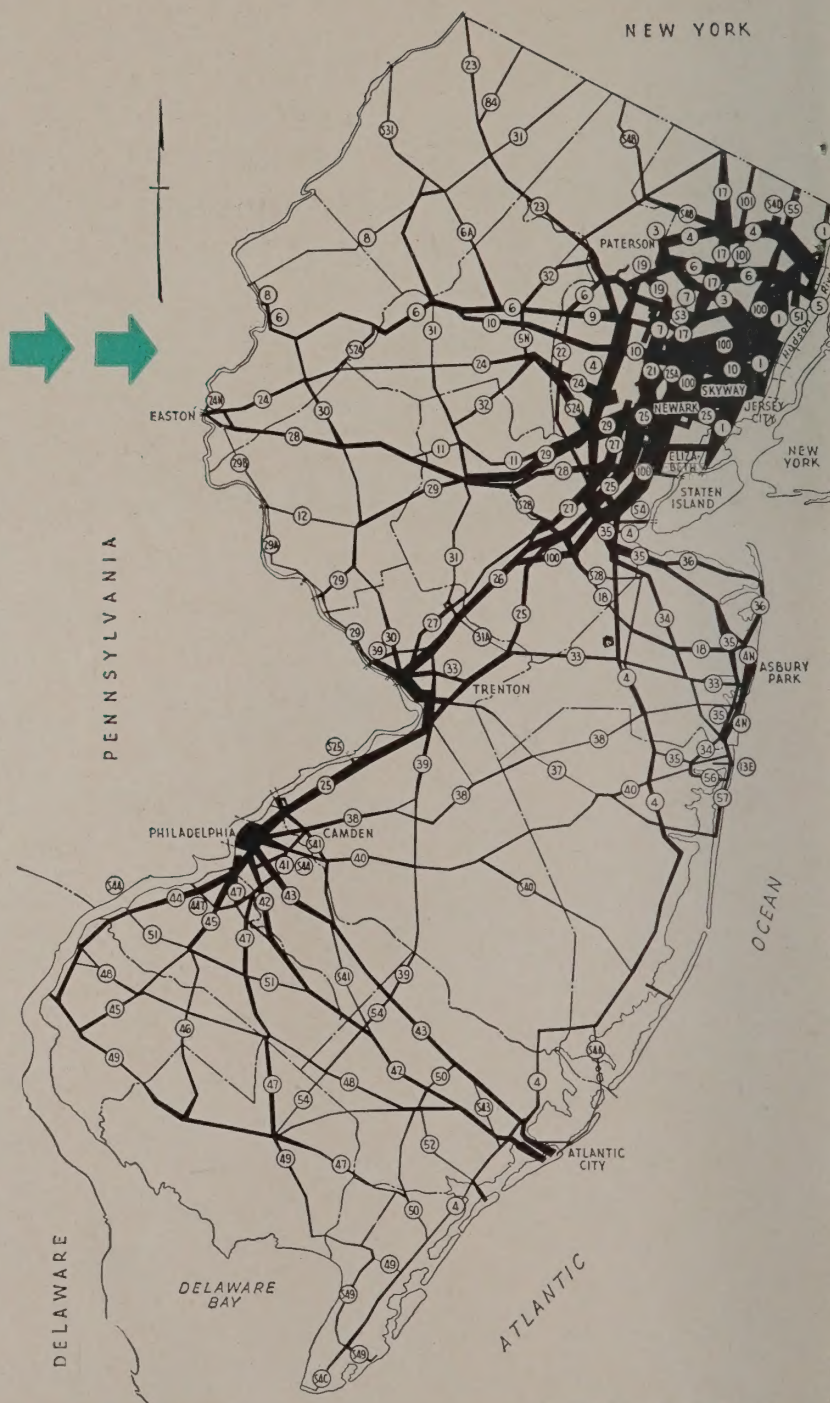
Joint Council of Municipal
Planning Boards in Essex County

Northern New Jersey Metropolitan Area Shows Greatest Traffic Congestion in State



Here are the Statistics...

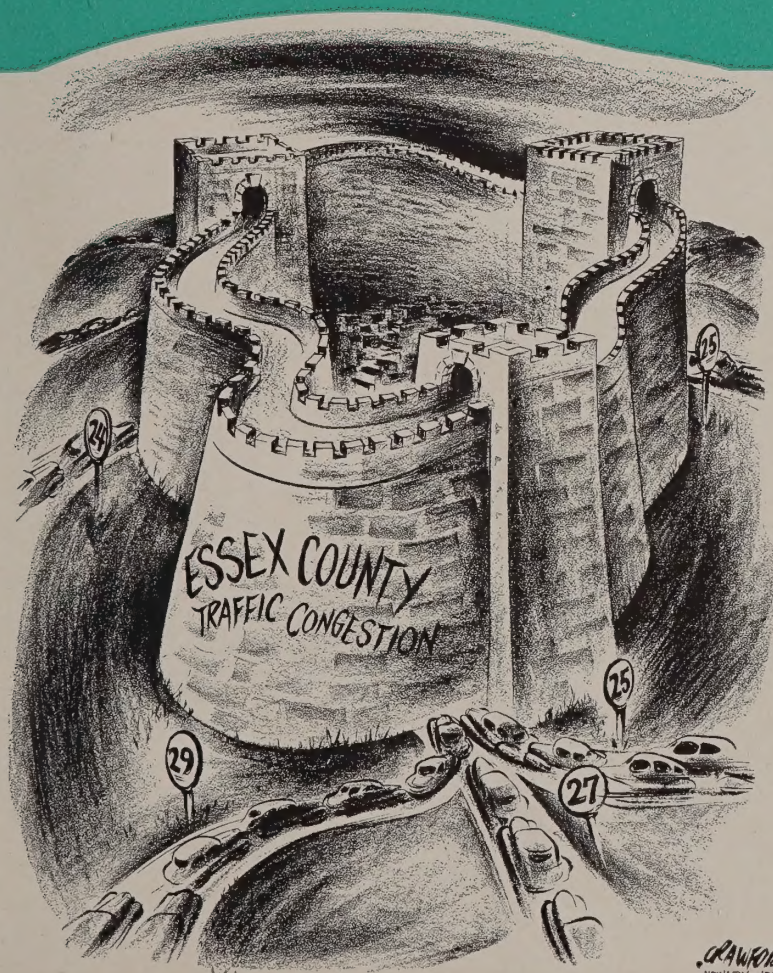
Daily Vehicle Miles by Counties*— 1940			
ATLANTIC	927,832	MIDDLESEX	1,692,354
BERGEN	2,540,443	MONMOUTH	1,345,132
BURLINGTON	1,028,978	MORRIS	1,195,175
CAMDEN	1,279,194	OCEAN	559,443
CAPE MAY	306,858	PASSAIC	1,203,666
CUMBERLAND	587,165	SALEM	433,959
ESSEX	2,908,620	SOMERSET	752,956
GLOUCESTER	783,299	SUSSEX	352,109
HUDSON	1,424,455	UNION	1,644,731
HUNTERDON	449,933	WARREN	426,577
MERCER	1,024,228	STATE AVERAGE	1,008,910



State Highway Department Map

*Computed on basis of number of vehicle units times road mileage. Includes all rural roads and through urban. Does not include local city streets.

Bucking a Chinese Wall of Traffic Congestion...



A SHARP THORN in the side of every Essex County motorist is the fact that he can drive the 14 miles from Newark to Midtown Manhattan far easier and faster than he can cover the six miles to West Orange.

What should be a short trip for him to the Oranges is unnecessarily long and irksome. This slow motion trip through crawling traffic not only frays his nerves — but it throttles the growth and development of Essex County Communities.

He knows that Essex County has contributed more than its share toward building the Skyway, bridges and tunnels which speed him to New York.

Now, he feels that Newark and the Oranges should be freed of their traffic jams. He, *and thousands of taxpayers like him*, are fed up.

The Planning Boards of Newark, East Orange, Orange and West Orange believe that the State of New Jersey and interested municipalities which have been in part responsible for this condition should now get together and do for the Newark metropolitan area what has been so willingly done for New York and Philadelphia.

We believe a man bound from Morristown to Newark should be entitled to a fast, comfortable and safe trip *all the way* — rather than traveling easily to the West Orange line, then bucking a Chinese Wall of traffic congestion the rest of the way into Newark.

We believe the State should be just as much interested in making highway travel convenient between West Orange and Newark as between Morristown and West Orange.

We believe that it is time to abandon the policy of building fine

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**In Essex County
State Highways**

end

at Urban Fringe or

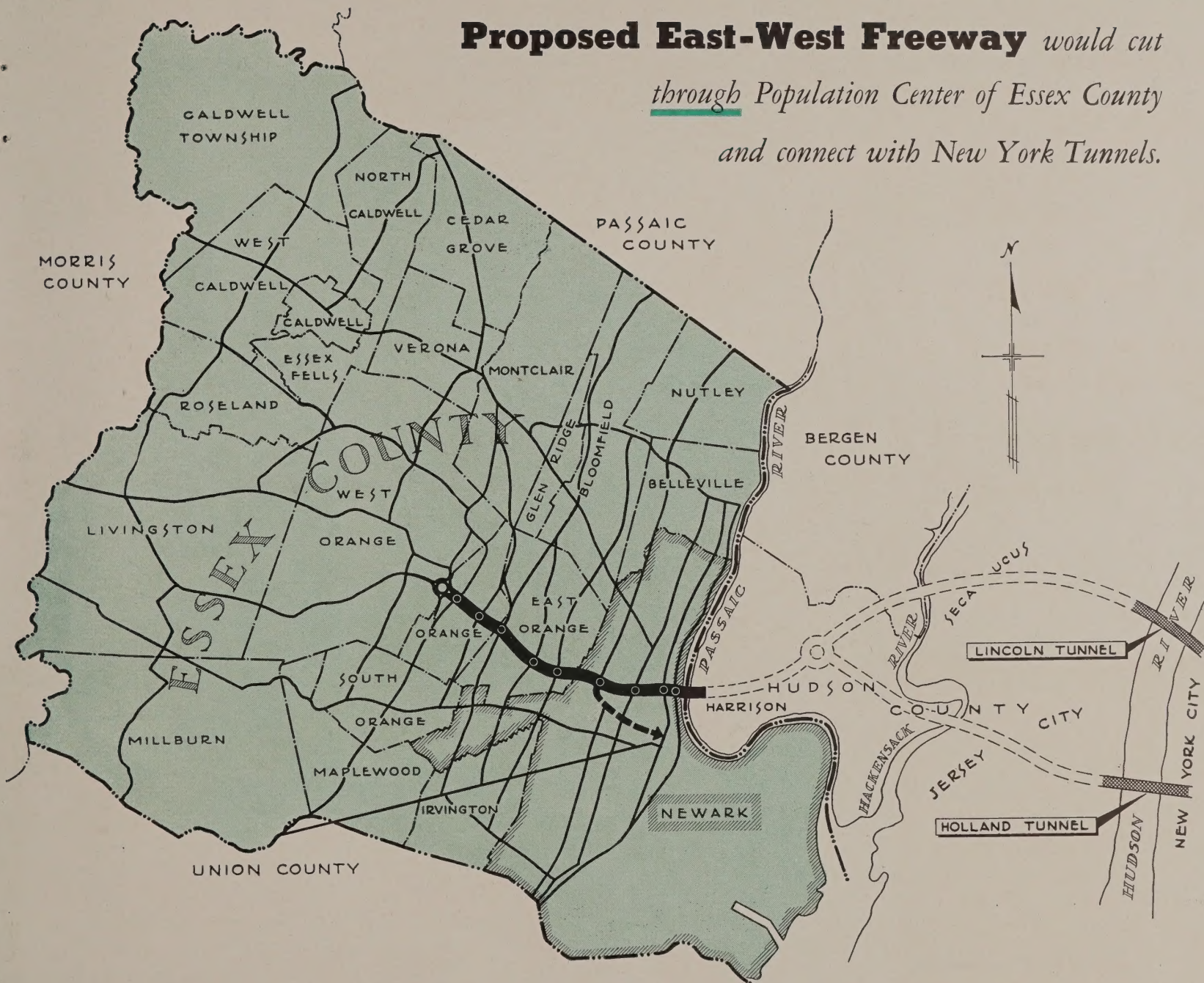
by-pass

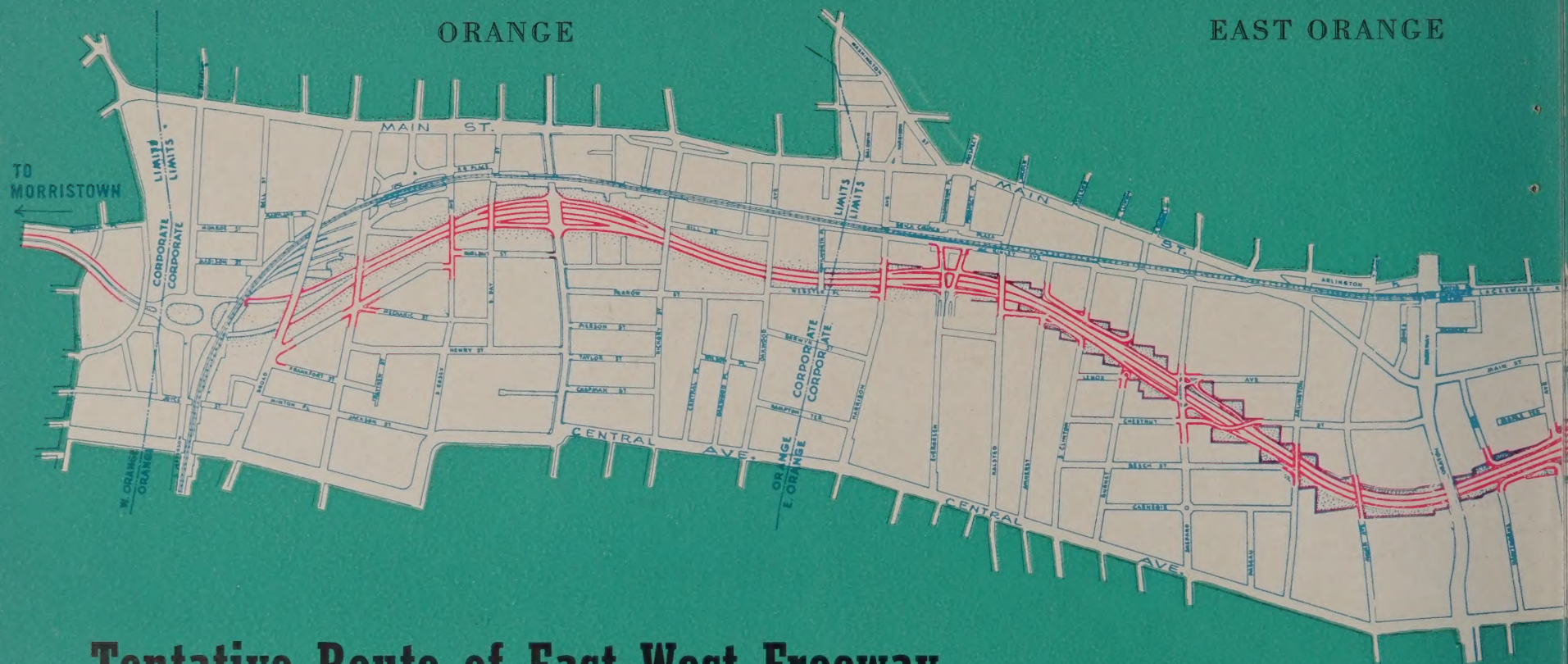
Populous Urban

centers...



Proposed East-West Freeway *would cut*
through Population Center of Essex County
and connect with New York Tunnels.





Tentative Route of East-West Freeway

Final alignment to be determined by New Jersey State Highway Department

(CONTINUED)

broad highways up to the city limits — and then letting the municipalities worry about how their inadequate city streets will accommodate the huge flood of traffic poured into them by the State Highway System.

The Planning Boards of the four municipalities are unanimously agreed that the solution will be found in a controlled-access freeway or through highway artery on which all kinds of motor traffic may safely move at higher speeds, running from West Orange to Newark. As evidenced by the enactment of Chapter 176 of the Laws of 1946, both the Legislature and the State Highway Department approve of this project.

Such a freeway, appropriately landscaped, without grade crossings but with conveniently located entrances and exits in each of the four municipalities, would for most of its length, parallel the Lackawanna Railroad and provide an alternate link between points west and connecting with the new Stickel Memorial Bridge over the Passaic River in Newark.

Traffic bound for Newark would connect with Raymond Boulevard by means of a traffic inter-change at Clifton Avenue, and New York bound traffic could continue over the Stickel Bridge to the Lincoln or Holland Tunnel.

NEWARK



Harland Bartholomew and Associates
City Planners

In Newark, the freeway would connect via Raymond Boulevard and McCarter Highway with the Pulaski Highway and the New Route 100.

The four communities are in agreement on the design of the freeway, part elevated and part depressed, following the contour of the land.

As the engineering of the proposed improvements is the responsibility of the State Highway Department and the U. S. Public Roads Administration, decisions as to location and type of facility would be made by those agencies. However, the local communities have a very great stake in the improvements and it is reasonable to expect their wishes will be given consideration.

(CONTINUED)

TO NEW YORK

NEWARK BUSINESS
DISTRICT

BRICK CHURCH
BUSINESS DISTRICT

CENTRAL AVENUE
BUSINESS DISTRICT

PROPOSED
FREEWAY

TO WEST ORANGE



Approximate Route of proposed East-West Freeway through the Oranges.

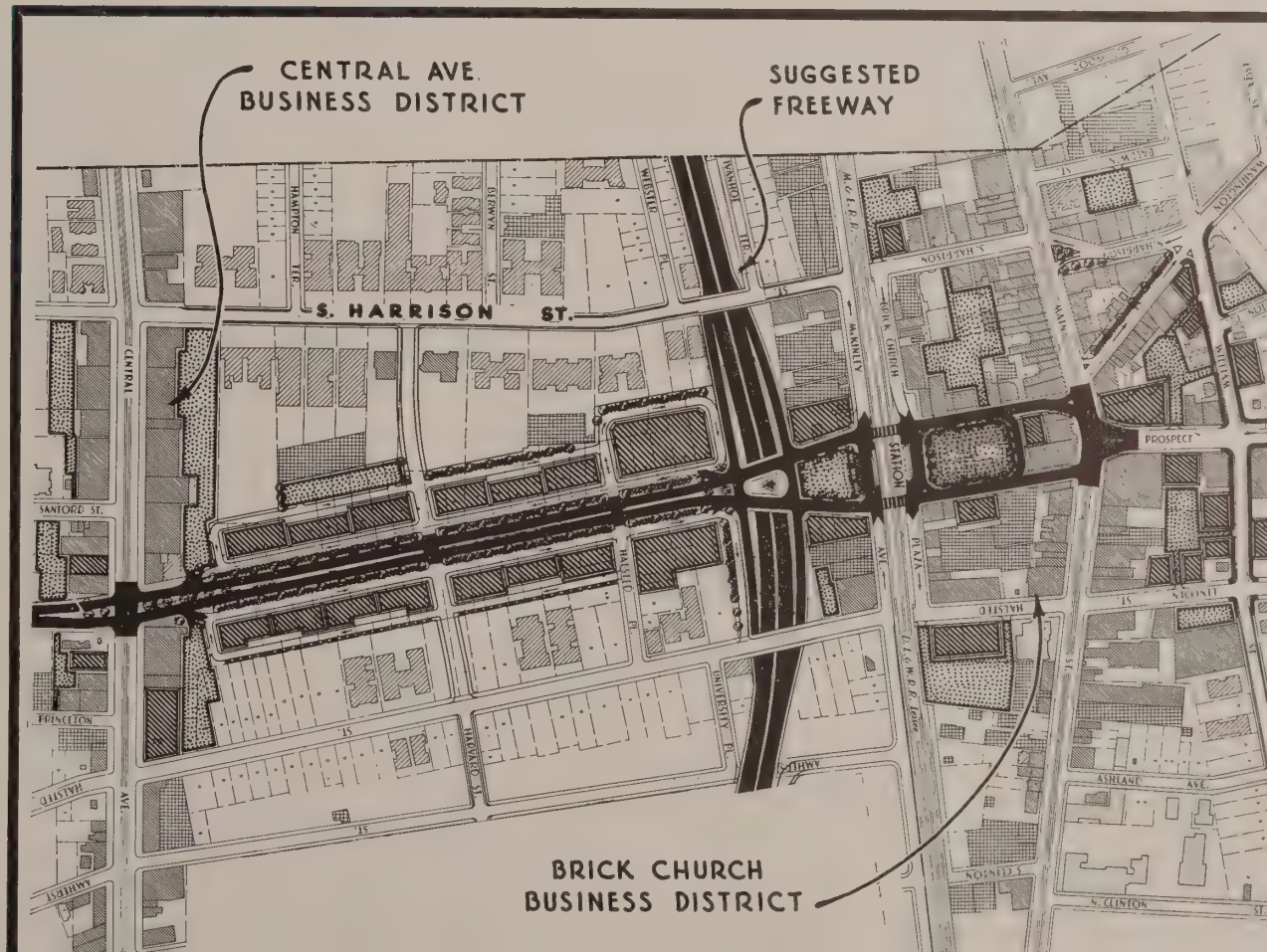
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Wide rights-of-way would insulate adjoining properties from noise of traffic. And instead of destroying values adjacent to it, they would create new values and thus offset largely the value of ratables affected by the construction.

Essex County, with twenty per cent of the State's population and twenty-five per cent of its assessed valuations, has only two per cent—35.7 miles—of state highway total mileage. During the last thirty years, Essex County contributed to the highway fund 160 million dollars, and received in return about 50 millions. The rest went to other counties of the State.

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East Orange Section of proposed East-West Freeway showing access to Brick Church and Central Avenue Business Districts.





CLIFTON AVE
TRAFFIC INTERCHANGE

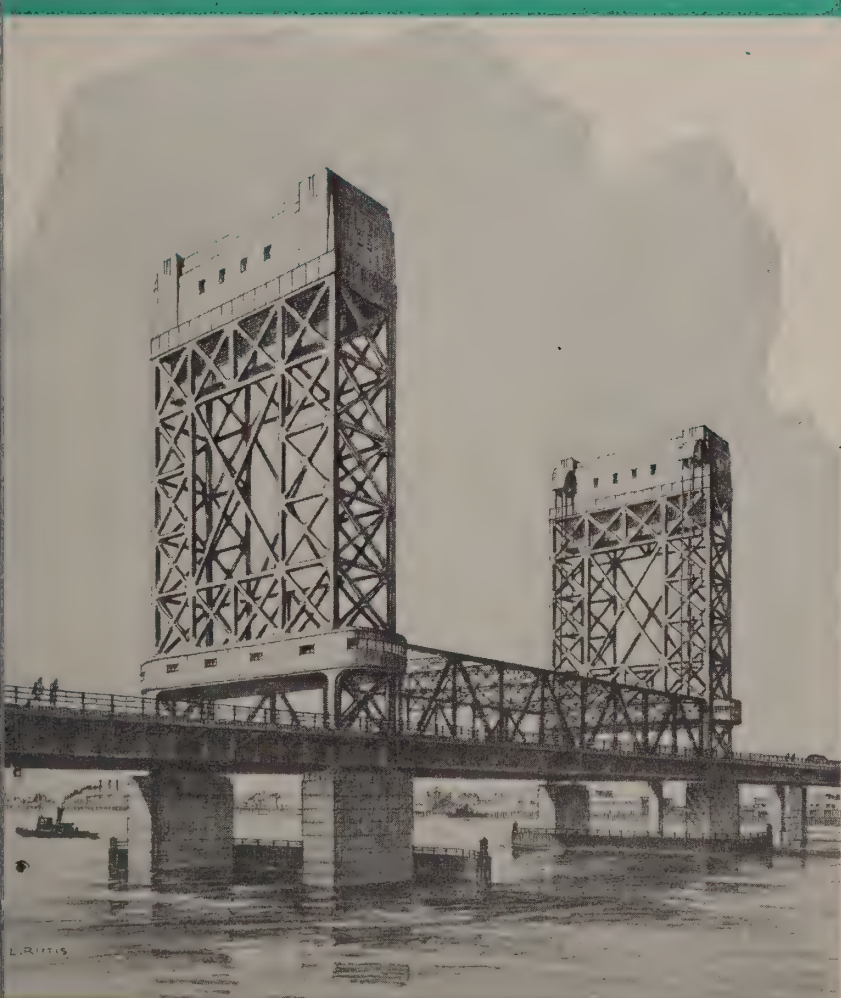
TO NEW YORK

NEWARK
BUSINESS DISTRICT

Aerial View of Newark showing proposed East-West Freeway connections with Downtown Business District



Newark News Photo



(CONTINUED)

Until now, the New Jersey State Highway Department has been confronted with the problem of providing a network of roads connecting principal built-up communities. The result is 1,687 miles of fine highways, except in metropolitan areas where traffic is forced to use local streets. And though surveys show that 86 per cent of all highway traffic originates or terminates in large cities, no municipality can afford the cost of the modern grade-separated type of highway now so badly needed.

The Federal Government recognizes that traffic congestion blights urban areas and is trying to remedy it. Approximately \$9,433,000 of Federal funds has been allocated to New Jersey for the first phase of a three-year program.

With Federal-State funds being allocated for specific use in urban areas (\$5,527,000 of the \$9,433,000), and with the State matching the sum to double the amount, it is only logical that the needs of Essex County should be fully recognized and that substantial sums be expended in Essex for necessary East-West "through highway" improvements.

The importance to Essex County and to North Jersey of more adequate facilities for faster motor travel cannot be emphasized too strongly. In the New York area in recent years, the populations of Westchester County and Long Island have grown much more rapidly than in Essex County and vicinity because of modern highway and transportation facilities.

Bureau of Census statistics show that while the population of the New York Region increased by 7.4% between 1930 and 1940, Essex County's population increase was but 1/2 of 1% in that decade. During this same time, suburban municipalities in Westchester and Nassau Counties in New York showed a population increase ranging from 6% to 65%, far out-distancing the growth of Essex County's municipalities.

We believe this proposed freeway would help bring a similar growth and prosperity to Essex County. The support of every citizen is solicited for this project.



William Stickel Memorial Bridge connecting proposed Freeway with Hudson County.

Highway Department Photo

Essex County

Freeholders Act

By JACOB S. GLICKENHAUS

Chairman, Highways and Bridges Committee

The Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Essex on January 9, 1947 gave their official approval to the Proposed Freeway by unanimously adopting a resolution reading in part:

"WHEREAS, the acquisition of the necessary rights of way and the immediate construction and completion of a freeway to extend from the William A. Stickel Memorial Bridge over the Passaic River to Northfield Road in the Town of West Orange, presents an exigency requiring immediate acquisition of the necessary rights of way and construction and completion at the earliest possible date, therefore be it

"RESOLVED, that this Board hereby strongly urges immediate action by the Governor, the Legislature and the State Highway Commission to cause this work to be started immediately and that appropriate action be taken by the Legislature and the Highway Commission to provide the necessary funds to carry out this project, giving the same the highest possible priority in state highway projects for the year 1947. . . ."

Excerpts from

"Green Light Ahead"

By CAREY LONGMIRE

Reprinted by permission from Collier's, December 29, 1945

"The real traffic bottleneck is the layout of America's largest towns and cities. The cities are the biggest barrier to fast motor transportation. Mostly they follow the old and familiar grid pattern of streets crossing each other at right angles, all the way to the city limits and beyond. Every street is automatically a through street, and every corner a potential source of accidents and traffic delay.

"The cities are suffering, as a result. . . . The old centers may tend to become mere industrial slums, full of tenements and sweatshops, with flophouses and pawnshops occupying the business buildings which fifty years ago were homes of established trade.

"In many cases the new suburbs develop into new metropolitan districts of their own. Not having been planned with any greater foresight than the old ones, they soon show the same blight as the cities themselves.

"The cities must pay the bill for these migrations. . . . As business leaves the blighted central areas, cities lose tax income. Cities all over the nation are sick, and efficient transportation is the best possible remedy for most of their ailments. Modern expressways are much more needed in the cities than anywhere else."

Organizations Endorsing Proposed East-West Freeway

SINCE THE FREEWAY was first proposed by the Newark Central Planning Board in September 1945 and shortly afterwards approved by the Joint Council of Planning Boards in Essex County, many other organizations including local governments, civic and trade associations, have during the past year gone on record favoring the project. They are:

City Council of East Orange

Borough Council of Glen Ridge

Township Committee of Maplewood

Board of Township Commissioners of Montclair

Board of Commissioners of Newark

Board of Commissioners of Orange

Board of Trustees of the Village of South Orange

Board of Commissioners of West Orange

Broad Street and Merchants Association of Newark

Chamber of Commerce of City of Newark

Newark Safety Council

Newark Traffic Club

Board of Realtors of the Oranges and Maplewood

Chamber of Commerce and Civics of the Oranges and
Maplewood

Essex County Bankers Association

New Jersey Automobile Club (AAA Affiliate)

New Jersey Federation of Official Planning Boards



